

Risk assessment for musicians at St Giles Cripplegate during the 2020/21 covid-19 pandemic

Based on Royal School of Church Music advice and model risk assessment - <https://www.rscm.org.uk/covid-19-resources-for-churches/>.

Access to church buildings for purposes of performance in live services

Risk: Transmission of virus through close personal contact

The choir enters at least an hour earlier than the congregation and Anne will warn them to take care when leaving, in order to avoid close contact with others at the exit.

Risk: Transmission of virus in enclosed space.

During the working week, the Administrator opens the office doors and the north door to ventilate the church buildings each morning. The church is a large space and risks to the choir and organists playing either chancel or grand organ correspondingly low.

Risk: Insufficient cleaning of shared spaces

The church's cleaner thoroughly cleans the church on a regular basis.

Risk: Additional risk of infection

Anne considers it unnecessary to cordon off the area used by the musicians, but she will ensure they sit at least 2 metres from the congregation and from each other.

Risk: Separated space is not observed for musicians

Anne will confirm to the musicians their seating and standing positions, which will be 2 metres (i.e. more generous than the recommended 1 metre which isn't legal).

Risk: Transmission of virus through close personal contact.

- Only one organist, and perhaps occasionally one singer, will be in the organ loft at any one time. Anne will explain to the musicians that they must not attempt to pass each other on the organ loft stairs. There are no other narrow staircases or corridors to navigate at St Giles.

Other RSCM advice in this category

- Anne will remind the musicians about safe practices (no physical contact; frequent handwashing/sanitising)
- Anne will be responsible for ensuring high-risk surfaces and touch points have been sanitised before the musicians arrive.
- The toilets are already provided with soap, disposable hand towels and a bin for towels.
- There are no unnecessary and removable items in thoroughfares.

Ensuring participants' safety

Risk: Attendee within the group is a virus carrier

Anne will emphasise to the musicians, in advance of their attendance, the current guidance on self-isolation.

Risk: Virus spread by hands

The church has provided hand sanitiser at the church entrance and Anne will provide more for musicians to use during rehearsal and the service.

Risk: Illness/ Unexpected absence

- Our library has a stock of vocal solos, duets and trios in case any singer is sick, and can change the music at the last minute.
- Both Elizabeth and Anne are usually on duty so it is unlikely that both would be ill simultaneously, and we also have Emma, the organ scholar.
- The musicians already know that they must contact Anne if they are unable to attend.

Risk: Venue unavailable (e.g. after a COVID occurrence)

The musicians' actions will be guided by the church in this event.

Risk: Virus transmitted via printed music

- Anne will set out the choir music 48 hours before use.
- Anne will remind singers to bring disposable gloves in case any of the music, despite planning, must be handled by more than one person on Sunday.
- Anne, Elizabeth and Emma will share responsibility for collecting and tidying the music after the service, either using disposable gloves or sanitising hands immediately afterwards.
- Anne will ask singers to bring their own pencils for marking the music.

Risk: Virus transmitted via keyboard instruments

We always sanitise the organs after use. On a Sunday morning no organ console will be shared between more than two people.

Anne has added hygiene instructions to each organ console.

Risk: Transmission of virus through close personal contact

Each organist must be responsible for their own page turns: no one else will turn her pages.

Anne will set out the choir chairs in advance.

The conductor will stand at least 2 metres from the singers.

Access to church buildings for Organ Lessons

For organ lessons

- Masks are worn
- At least 1 metre, and when possible, 2 metres social distance is observed
- Teacher and student sanitise immediately before playing,
- The entire organ console is sanitised between each lesson.

Access to the Parish Office to use the Practice Organ

Risk: Organist is a virus carrier

Anyone displaying symptoms should cancel their practice session. An asymptomatic carrier can infect other organists by aerosols exhaled and either suspended in the air or deposited on a surface nearby. Infected aerosols remain suspended and can be inhaled for up to 12 hours. Touching a contaminated surface and then touching face or eyes can transmit the virus for up to 48 hours.

To protect themselves from aerosols exhaled by others all organists must wear masks. The masks will also reduce the creation of additional aerosols. They must sanitise their hands before and after their practice session and avoid touching their faces.

The Administrator is responsible for ventilating the room and cleaning his desk and office equipment at the beginning and end of his office hours. He should not touch any part of the organ so will not be exposed to any aerosols exhaled by a practising organist that come to rest on it.

Risk: Administrator is a virus carrier

Organists will not be at risk if he fulfils his obligation to thoroughly ventilate the office at the end of the working day and not to touch any part of the organ. Any residual risk will be mitigated by wearing a mask.

Risk: Virus transmitted via keyboard instruments

Elizabeth and Anne sanitise all the practice organ's once a week.

Risk: Virus spread by hands

Use hand sanitiser before and after a practice session. Disinfectant wipes are provided to clean frequently touched surfaces including the entry keypad, door handles, light switches and the non-porous organ surfaces.

Risk: Transmission of virus through close personal contact

Social distancing must be observed at all times. The legal requirement is 2 metres or 1 metre while wearing a mask and the office is too small to accommodate 2 metres especially in the entrance lobby.

Risk: Insufficient cleaning of shared spaces

The office is thoroughly cleaned once a week.

Risk: Organists/Administrator unaware of risk and procedures

This Risk Assessment is published on the church website at <https://www.stgilesnewsite.co.uk/coronavirus-covid-19/> and the recommended procedures displayed on the Organ console.